

# Las Vegas FIRENEWS

1998 IABC-Las Vegas **BRONZE QUILL** Award-Winning Newsletter

Volume 10, No. 3 Las Vegas, Nevada December, 2001



## David L. Washington Named New LVFR Fire Chief

After an extensive internal search, the Las Vegas City Council ratified the city manager's designation of David L. Washington as Las Vegas Fire & Rescue's new Fire Chief during the August 15 City Council Meeting.

Washington, 50, has served as the interim fire chief since the departure of Chief Mario Treviño, who accepted an offer in May of this year to lead the City and County of San Francisco Fire Department.

Washington, who is the first African American fire chief for the City of Las Vegas, began his career with the city of Las Vegas as a firefighter in 1974 and has since steadily progressed through the ranks. He has served in various capacities, including the community relations specialist, fire administration officer (Captain), fire training officer (Captain), acting training chief, as well as battalion chief for both training and support services. Prior to being named interim fire chief, he served as the deputy chief/fire marshal.

Washington received his associate of arts degree in 1981 and an associate of arts in fire training in 1994, both from the Community College of Southern Nevada. He is a 1997 graduate of Leadership Las Vegas and continues his education today by taking continuing education courses and special training classes. In addition, he is an adjunct instructor for Carl L. Holmes Executive Development Institute at Dillard University in New Orleans, Louisiana. He is a member of several professional associations such as the Southern Nevada Fire Chiefs Association, the Black Chief Officers Committee, the National Forum of Black Public Administrators, the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association and the National Fire Protection Association. He is active in the community, serving on numerous boards including the United Way of Southern Nevada and is the co-founder of Camp Brotherhood. He is the recipient of numerous awards and honors and most recently, Washington participated in the successful passage of the Fire Safety Initiative 2000, which will prepare for Las Vegas Fire & Rescue to meet the challenges presented by a rapidly growing city.

A panel of three fire chiefs from across the country assisted in the fire chief selection process by conducting oral boards for the position. In addition, each candidate participated in written exercises and a mock media interview.

Congratulations to Chief Washington on his appointment and best wishes for an outstanding tenure as fire chief for one of the fastest growing cities in the nation.



*Chief  
David L. Washington*

## Greg Gammon Appointed Deputy Chief

Fire Chief David L. Washington appointed a 17-year veteran of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue to the position of deputy fire chief. Greg Gammon received his badge during a special ceremony on September 28, making the appointment official. Ironically the new deputy chief's father, Richard Gammon, was also a deputy fire chief for the Las Vegas Fire Department for a number of years before retiring after 32 years of service.

Deputy Chief Gammon was selected by the Fire Chief from a field of three finalists, all members of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue. Chief Gammon joined the fire department in April 1984, and held the position of firefighter and paramedic for seven years, as well as captain for another seven years. Three years ago, he was promoted to battalion chief, overseeing the department's Support Services Division. Support Services directs several areas of this department, including coordinating the purchase, repair and maintenance of department vehicles. During the past two years, Chief Gammon helped write the vehicle specifications and over-

saw the purchase of 25 new pieces of fire apparatus, at a total cost of approximately \$11 million dollars. This is one of the largest single purchases by a fire department in the U.S. at one time. In August 2001, Chief Gammon was interviewed by Chief Washington for the deputy chief position and was subsequently selected this past September.



Greg Gammon

Deputy fire chief is the second "in command" position in the fire department. Currently, there are four deputy fire chiefs within this department, with each deputy chief leading a major division: Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Administration and Fire Prevention. Currently, Chief Gammon will be assigned to the Fire Prevention division, acting as the city's fire marshal.



Louis Baker

## Louis Baker's Construction Update

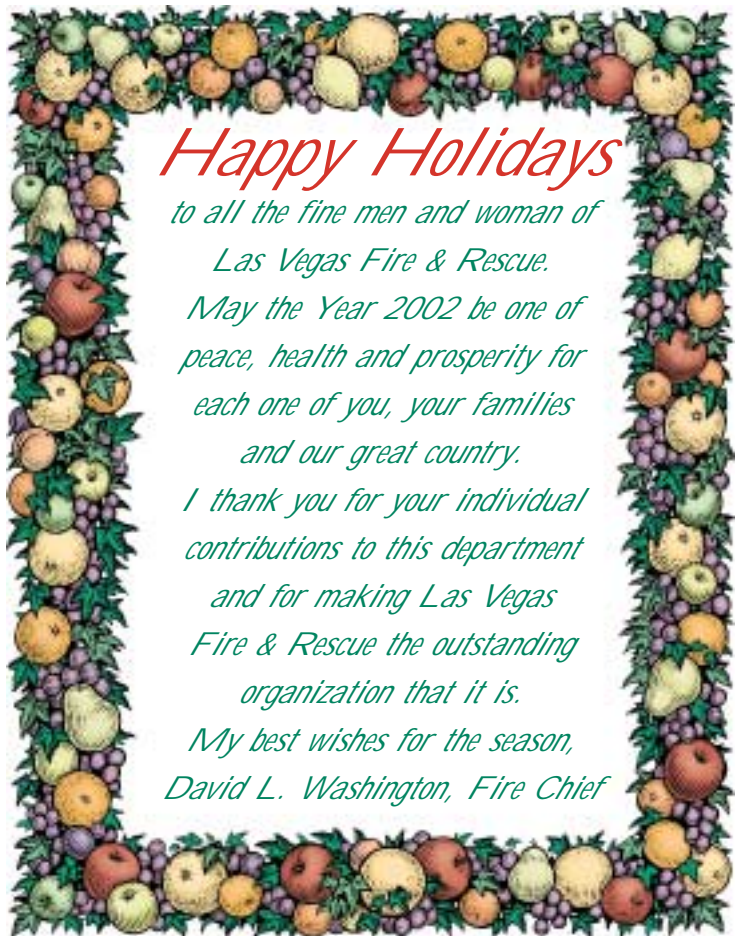
In the near future, Las Vegas Fire & Rescue will add four new fire stations and three rescue bays to its inventory. With the success of the Fire Safety Initiative 2000, the department is on the way to expanding the operations. Fire Station #10 is already under construction and scheduled for completion in July 2002. It is located on Martin Luther King between Charleston and Oakey. The 10,738 square foot facility is almost identical to Station #41, which opened in December 2000.

Proposed Station #43 is located on the northwest corner of Smoke Ranch Road and Torrey Pines Avenue, surrounded by a residential community. One unique feature of this site is a small park on the east side of the station. It includes a bus shelter, tot lot, and open space. In honor of fallen firefighters, a memorial is planned between the park and the fire station.

Proposed Station #44 is located about 600 feet west of the intersection of Buffalo and Washington, next to a Water District pumping station. The site is located on land leased from the Bureau of Land Management. The challenge at this location is the amount of caliche, at some points only 6 inches below the surface. A future City of Las Vegas regional park is expected to surround the fire station.

Proposed Station #45 is located at the northwest corner of Fort Apache and Gilmore Avenue, the major intersections being Fort Apache and Alexander. This is the last station planned under current expansion. Like Station #43, a small park for adjacent residents and a memorial are part of the development plan. To assist traffic flow, we are also removing a section of saw tooth roads by installing temporary paving.

Existing Stations #2, #7, and #9, have rescue bay additions of 1,850



### *Happy Holidays*

*to all the fine men and women of  
Las Vegas Fire & Rescue.*

*May the Year 2002 be one of  
peace, health and prosperity for  
each one of you, your families  
and our great country.*

*I thank you for your individual  
contributions to this department  
and for making Las Vegas  
Fire & Rescue the outstanding  
organization that it is.*

*My best wishes for the season,  
David L. Washington, Fire Chief*

square feet on the way. Each station was initially designed with future expansion in mind to accommodate our growth. The additional spaces include, apparatus bay, three rescue bays, office, bathroom and stor-

*Continued on Page Twelve*

**Mayor: Oscar B. Goodman**

**City Council: Gary Reese • Michael J. McDonald • Larry Brown  
Lynette Boggs McDonald • Lawrence Weekly • Michael Mack**

**City Manager: Virginia Valentine**

**Las Vegas Fire & Rescue: Fire Chief: David L. Washington**

**Deputy Fire Chiefs: Ken Riddle • Jeffrey Morgan • Richard Garcia • Greg Gammon**





*(LtoR) Ike Kaiser, President; Maxine Kaiser, Secretary; Willie Browser, Treasurer; Dick Jacobs & Dr. Marcia Tenburg of the Northwest Las Vegas Kiwanis Club present Fire Chief David L. Washington (center) and Deputy Chief Ken Riddle with 50 teddy bears to be used at traumatic incidents involving children. The Northwest Kiwanis Club meets Tuesday mornings at the Las Vegas Golf Course.*

## Awards Ceremony Planned

At the recommendation of Fire Chief David L. Washington and the Executive Staff, a new awards program is being initiated. This ceremony will be held once each year and will cover a number of different awards. We plan to have the initial ceremony in late January or early February 2002, and afterwards the event will be held each year during Fire Prevention Week.

The ceremony, location to be announced, will be recorded for viewing on our cable channel KCLV-TV2. The award categories are as follows:

**FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR**  
**EMT/PARAMEDIC OF THE YEAR**  
**CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR\*** (\*Administration, Support, Clerical)  
**COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**  
**FIRE PREVENTION EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**  
**CHIEF OFFICER OF THE YEAR**  
**VALOR AWARD**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**  
**FIRE CHIEF'S AWARD OF DISTINCTION**  
**CITIZEN'S VALOR AWARD**



Nominations were requested from all department staff and then forwarded on to the appropriate review committee for voting on the award recipient. The Fire Chief decides the **Fire Chief's Award**. A **Review Committee** decides the Valor and Community Service Awards. The Citizen's Valor Award will be given to a civilian who performed a heroic act of bravery, worthy of recognition. *(It is customary to give out as many Citizen Valor Awards as necessary, but it must be an outstanding act.)*

The recipients in each category are to receive a plaque. The Valor Award will consist of a medallion that can be worn around the neck along with a plaque. We also plan to issue a ribbon for each category that can be worn on the dress uniform.

During the ceremony, we plan to have a guest Master of Ceremonies and, if possible, give a special tribute to the **Fallen Firefighters of NYC**. Since it will be the beginning of the new year, we plan to also recognize the busiest units and station during the ceremony instead of at a City Council Meeting.

Nominations closed on December 14 and a nomination list was submitted to each division for their consideration. We look forward to this event and hope that this will prove to be a much-anticipated event each year.



*Law enforcement units led the parade.*



*Fire units from across Southern Nevada participated.*



*The largest crowd was in front of the NY,NY hotel.*



*The length of the parade was nearly a mile.*

## PARADE SHOWS SUPPORT FOR NYC

It really wasn't planned as a major event but it certainly turned into one, when nearly 100 emergency vehicles from a variety of public safety agencies across southern Nevada participated in a parade down the Las Vegas Strip from Fire Station #1 to Russell Road.

It all began when Firefighter Eugene Marshal, just after crews had finished putting American flags on the rigs at the station, asked Battalion Chief Larry Wickliffe to give permission for Station #1 crews to drive down Las Vegas Boulevard. They wanted to show the public the flags flying on the rigs. After talking to PIO Tim Szymanski, it was decided that it was too late in the day and the rigs might be caught in rush hour traffic. The PIO suggested that they do it on Sunday, a time when there is little traffic and the next time the same crew was on duty. He also suggested that the crews drive all the way down the Strip and back, although this would need to be cleared with the County. After calling Deputy Fire Chief Ken Riddle, who was in a meeting with the Southern Nevada Fire Chiefs, they received approval to drive down the Strip the following Sunday.

The PIO then contacted Metro to see if "a couple" of motorcycle officers would escort the units. Later in the day, Metro called and replied that they had assigned 25 units, five from each division, to assist the motorcycle officers who were planning to attend.

When Sunday morning came, everyone was surprised to find both parking lots at Station #1 packed with emergency vehicles, along with two medical helicopters hovering above. Although their participation was not solicited, the news of the "parade" spread from one agency to another. Nearly 100 units from law enforcement, fire and medical agencies showed up.

It took units roughly one hour to travel the approximately six-mile route. By the time units arrived at Tropicana and Las Vegas Boulevard, hundreds of people were lining the sides of the street waving and yelling as the parade passed to show their support.

Fire trucks, police cars, officers on bicycles and motorcycles, rescue units, ambulances and two helicopters formed the parade. What was intended to be a small, event took a life of its own and was a huge success.

Many who did not view or take part in the parade expressed much disappointment because they could not participate. The good news is that another parade is being planned for May, 2002. This will be a well-planned occasion that will be publicized and will begin from Fire Station #1 to the **NEW YORK, NEW YORK HOTEL & CASINO**, where a larger event is planned to honor the Fallen Firefighters of NYC. It will take place on a weekday, at approximately 6:00 p.m., so people will have the opportunity to line the Boulevard to view a variety of emergency units and the personnel. This time, there will be much planning, affording the opportunity for members to participate and for their families to observe. LVFR staff be sure to read your **"FIRE FLASH"** for more information, as the next parade is expected to be even a bigger and better event.

*Coming in 2002—A special commemorative edition of the Las Vegas Firenews, featuring coverage of the events of September 11.*





## 3rd Community Emergency Response Team Formed

What would happen if an 8.0 earthquake occurred in Las Vegas, or if a tornado were to hit a large part of one of the residential areas of the city? During a very large disaster, chances are that damage would be so great and calls for assistance would be so numerous, they might exceed available resources. Many of the calls for assistance are not life threatening, but require immediate attention. One way to answer that immediate need is to train citizens on how to handle minor emergencies when public safety agencies are not able to respond immediately.

A program to train citizens on how to handle such emergencies until professional first responders can arrive was developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and taught by Las Vegas Fire & Rescue staff. The program is called "**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM**," better known as **CERT**. The program is currently used in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Salt Lake City and, to date, three teams have been trained in Las Vegas.

During June and July 2001, seventeen people met once a week on Tuesdays for three hours to help organized the third **CITIZENS EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM** in Las Vegas. The first team was established in Sun City Summerlin in April, 1999. A second team, consisting of 17 employees of the Southern California Automobile Association here in Las Vegas, completed the course this past June.

*Participants of CERT are trained in the following areas:*

**Disaster Preparedness**—How to prepare for and types of disasters

**Fire Suppression**—How to extinguish small fires

**Medical Operations**—Learn life-saving techniques

**Light Search & Rescue**—How to perform simple rescue procedures

**Disaster Psychology & Team Organization**—How to emotionally handle a large disaster

## 2002 FLSA CYCLE

BEGIN	END	A PLATOON	B PLATOON	C PLATOON
12/23/01	01/19/02	4	28	4
01/20/02	02/16/02	4	4	28
02/17/02	03/16/02	4	28	4
03/17/02	04/13/02	28	4	4
04/14/02	05/11/02	4	28	4
05/12/02	06/08/02	28	4	4
06/09/02	07/06/02	4	4	28
07/07/02	08/03/02	28	4	4
08/04/02	08/31/02	4	4	28
09/01/02	09/28/02	4	28	4
09/29/02	10/26/02	4	4	28
10/27/02	11/23/02	4	28	4
11/24/02	12/21/02	28	4	4
12/22/02	01/18/03	4	28	4

**Final Exercise**—Students perform a simulated disaster scene.

The program is not designed to make the average citizen a firefighter or paramedic. It is designed to teach what is necessary to help minimize injuries during a time when adequate first responders are stretched beyond available resources. Funding for the program was made available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's "Project Impact" program. The city of Las Vegas was selected as one of a number of cities across the United States by FEMA to receive the Project Impact funding to help prepare the community for possible disasters and to minimize the impact that disasters may inflict on a community.

The final class included a small-simulated disaster in which members of the CERT demonstrated what they learned to the media and visitors, followed by the presentation of their "Certificates of Completion."

## Be Prepared for Disasters at ALL Times

The tragic events that occurred in New York and Washington shows that disasters can occur at any time, unexpectedly, anywhere in the country. Sadly in most cases, people are not prepared and this can cause inconvenience, injury and possibly death.

Even though the event occurred far away, it still had an impact on Las Vegas. This was evident on September 11, when people crowded gas stations and grocery stores because they were concerned that supplies might run out.

Living in Las Vegas, there is the potential for disasters to occur without notice. It is now obvious that terrorism can occur anywhere in our country. Nevada is the third most seismic (earthquake prone) state in the country and flash floods are always a possibility. Coupled with the possibility of rolling blackouts or loss of technological services, it is obvious that an incident can occur without warning.

**HERE ARE SOME DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TIPS THAT EVERYONE SHOULD PRACTICE:**

1. Every home and car should have a first aid kit and fire extinguisher ready for use and everyone should know how to use it.
2. Flashlights with fresh batteries should be next to every bed, in your car and one should be available in your desk or workstation at work.
3. Have an extra battery for your cellular phone and keep your batteries

charged. Cellular phones have proven to be an important lifesaver many times. Keep it with you at all times and keep it charged and ready for use.

4. You should have a "disaster kit" made up in your home, ready to load in your car or take with you at a moment's notice. You should have enough supplies in the kit to last you three days with such items as:
  - a. **Extra medications in case drug stores are closed for an extended time.**
  - b. **Extra clothing, a jacket, blanket, toilet paper, paper towels.**
  - c. **Money in small bills and change. ATMs could be off-line for several days.**
  - d. **Portable radio and/or small TV.**
  - e. **Paper & pencils and reading material (gets boring in relocation shelters).**
  - f. **Extra batteries and flashlights.**
5. Attempt to keep your fuel tanks full at all times, never should go below half full.
6. Have enough food and water on hand at home for three days.
7. **The most important** and often overlooked item is **having a plan**. Discuss with family members what everyone should do in the event of a disaster, especially if everyone is separated. Discuss where you

*Continued on Page Twelve*

## LVFR Staff Raise \$97,713.10 for MDA

Once again, Las Vegas firefighters outdid themselves and collected a very respectful \$97,713.10 for the annual Muscular Dystrophy Association's "Boot Drive." This year's theme was *"With A Little Help From Our Friends..."*

The Boot Drive was established 50 years ago by firefighters Butch Snyder and Jim Gribbsby. During the first year of the boot drive, \$300 was raised by firefighters in Southern Nevada. This year \$347,173.000 was collected by members of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue, Boulder City Fire Department, Clark County Fire Department, Henderson Fire Department and North Las Vegas Fire Department.

Boot Drive representatives for LVFR consisted of Dean Fletcher, Mitchell Steinberg, Thelonious Adams, Thomas Aragon and Mario Gonzalez.

The event began with a media event held at Station #1, in which Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman and a host of other government and fire officials helped *"kickoff"* the Boot Drive. Some remarked it was the best media start ever! A new 30-second public service announcement was shown, which appeared on every valley television station and over a number of Cox Cable channels.

Of the \$97,713.10 collected by Las Vegas Fire & Rescue:

C Platoon collected \$38,908.38 on Wednesday, August 29

B Platoon collected \$30,395.99 on



MDA Media Event

Thursday, August 30

A Platoon collected \$26,408.73 on Friday, August 31 \*

(\*Many units were tied up on a 3-Alarm fire most of the day.)

Not only did firefighters help collect during

the three days, but also members of the Fire Explorers, Fire Prevention and a number of support staff and chief officers joined in. A huge debt of thanks goes out to all that helped.



3-Alarm Fire

## NFPA Committee Health & Wellness Update

Fire Training Officer Sandy Kirkwood recently attended a three-day meeting as a principal member of **N.F.P.A. COMMITTEE 1582/84 FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND WELLNESS**, in Reno, Nevada.

This committee is writing the nationwide standard that will be used by all fire departments that adhere to N.F.P.A. standards for department physicians, health and wellness programs and all rehab operations. A very comprehensive document, this standard will account for every physical aspect of a firefighter's position. Currently several years in the making, the committee hopes to have the work completed by 2002, and sent to a vote of all N.F.P.A. members. Drafts should be available within the next six months.

LVFR staff interested in reviewing this standard, should contact Sandy Kirkwood, who has a "rough draft" of the committee's work in her office.

## Benefit Association Assists Community at Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving was much brighter for many people this year because of the generous donation made by Las Vegas firefighters. With the community in dire need of turkeys for the traditional Thanksgiving meal, the Las Vegas Firefighter's Benefit Association donated more than 4,000 pounds of turkey, 200 birds to be exact, to the local chapter of the Salvation Army. The Las Vegas Firefighter's Benefit Association bought the turkeys with the help of the Albertson's store at Desert Inn & Nellis Boulevard.

Using a van, a spare fire engine and ambulance, the turkeys were delivered to the Salvation Army complex on West Owens on November 20. Assistant Chief Cherina Kleven spearheaded the project. Supported by Association President Mickey Pedrol and the rest of the Las Vegas Firefighter's Benefit Association, they called a number of stores to see where they could purchase the most

turkeys. When they talked with Albertson's, the store decided to give the firefighters a special deal. The result was 200 turkeys and the Salvation Army was very appreciative of the turkeys.

The Las Vegas Firefighter's Benefit Association is a private association made up of present and retired members of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue. The association conducts a number of projects throughout the year to benefit retired members of the department when needed and helps with various projects in the community. The two projects for which the association is most well known is the annual Firefighter's Ball in the Spring and the Annual Las Vegas Firefighters Fireworks Show held every July during the 4th of July. We are very proud of our association and all that they do for the community.

## LVFR Station #1 Busiest in Nation

**STATION #1 CREWS** were among numerous LVFR staff members that received awards from **FIREHOUSE MAGAZINE** during the August 15 City Council Meeting.

FIREHOUSE MAGAZINE, a national fire trade publication, calculated statistics submitted by departments nationally and determined that:

**UNIT CITATION AWARD**  
**ENGINE 1, ENGINE 10, RESCUE 1,**  
**BATTALION 1, PUBLIC INFO OFFICER**

**COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD**  
**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER**  
**TIMOTHY R. SZYMANSKI**

**BUSIEST FIRE STATION IN**  
**UNITED STATES**

**LAS VEGAS FIRE STATION 1**

**LAS VEGAS ENGINE 6—BUSIEST**  
**ENGINE IN LAS VEGAS WITH 3,313**  
**RUNS (52ND BUSIEST IN U.S.)**

**LAS VEGAS TRUCK 4—BUSIEST**  
**LADDER COMPANY IN LAS VEGAS WITH**  
**2,044 RUNS (36TH BUSIEST IN U.S.)**

**LAS VEGAS RESCUE 1—BUSIEST FIRE AMBULANCE**  
**IN LV 7,309 RUNS & 3RD BUSIEST IN U.S.**



*LVFR Crews honored by Firehouse Magazine.*

**LAS VEGAS BATTALION CHIEF 1—BUSIEST**  
**BATTALION CHIEF IN LV WITH 1,022 RUNS**

Congratulations to these hard working heroes!



# Metropolitan Medical Response System—MMRS

There has been a lot of media coverage lately about the Metropolitan Medical Response System, better known as MMRS. Exactly what is MMRS, what is its mission and who belongs to it?

The concept of the MMRS originally started in the metropolitan Washington D.C. area in 1995 as the Metropolitan Medical Strike Team (MMST). Using combined personnel and equipment resources from Washington, DC, Arlington County, Virginia and Montgomery, Prince George's counties in Maryland, the first MMST of its kind was established. Used primarily as a chemical response team, the MMST was capable of providing initial on scene emergency health and medical services following a terrorist incident involving weapons of mass destruction (nuclear-biological-chemical). The team also coordinated transportation of patients to medical facilities, and other support functions.

Building on the concept of what was being used in Washington DC, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services-Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) sought to develop a similar team in the city of Atlanta for the 1996 Summer Olympics.

As a result of the initial successes of the Washington DC and Atlanta MMST, Congress, as part of the Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1996, authorized the HHS to develop 25 additional MMSTs across the US in 1997. It was during this time the name was changed to Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) instead of MMST. In 1999, 20 additional cities were added and 25 more cities in 2000. One of those added in 2000, includes the city of Las Vegas.

During 2000, the Mayor and Council of the city of Las Vegas authorized Las Vegas Fire & Rescue to coordinate the MMRS for the Las Vegas Valley. The goal of the program is to develop a coordinated system of fire, law enforcement, EMS, hospitals, health district, and other response organizations to handle a mass casualty incident, which may involve thousands of victims.

Most disasters are the same in nature. They injure many people and cause a lot of destruction. MMRS is designed to be prepared for any incident it might face. Mass casualties may occur during a number of incidents including a large fire, an earthquake, tornado, jumbo jet crash, hazardous materials release and terrorist attack. It would take the coordinated and systematic approach of a number of agencies to handle the large number of victims of a mass casualty incident. That is what MMRS is designed to handle.

Although MMRS has had more recognition recently because of the events in New York City and Washington DC, MMRS is designed to handle any mass casualty incident. Actually when MMRS was being researched by the city of Las Vegas in 2000, earthquakes were the first disaster that was thought of.

Some of the items that are being addressed with MMRS includes an improved communications system which links all medical facilities in the valley, putting together a stock pile of medical supplies such as bandages, dressing, blankets, surgical equipment and even antidotes. Public safety, health, medical and other agencies are meeting to finalize a plan on how an incident would be handled. The plan includes the coordination with state and federal agencies so that if medical supplies and personnel were depleted, they would respond from other cities in the United States. In the worst case, additional teams from

other cities would arrive in Las Vegas within 12 hours with additional supplies and personnel. Other agencies that might respond and offer assistance would include the military, FEMA and Center for Disease Control (CDC).

How MMRS would be implemented. The Metropolitan Medical Response System has no "special teams" on stand-by. It builds upon teams and agencies that are in use everyday here in the valley.

Scenario: In a local shopping mall eating area, a container is discarded into a refuse container, the contents are unknown. Within minutes people complain of breathing difficulties and eyes burning. Someone calls 9-1-1 to report the incident. Typically, Fire, EMS and Police would respond to the incident. As the first responders arrive on the scene, they find a number of people coughing, wiping their eyes, some start to fall to the ground. Fire crews request additional personnel to respond along with a request for the hazardous materials team. Police start to evacuate the mall. As more crews arrive, hospitals are notified that a number of victims may be coming in. Using the communications system for MMRS hospitals communicate with each other to see how many victims can be taken at each hospital. EMS crews are told in transport where to take the victims. Within minutes additional people begin to become ill, as the gas has been spread by the air conditioner in the mall. EMS advises the hospital that a significant number of additional victims may be enroute. The hospitals report that a number of people have driven to the hospital on their own and they are near capacity. HazMat crews are attempting to identify the source of the gas and find it in the trash container, they have not yet been able to determine its contents. Because hospitals are near capacity, the MMRS is activated and a large vacant warehouse is identified as a receiving location for victims that are not serious. Supplies that have been stock piled are sent to the warehouse and medical personnel listed on the MMRS roster are dispatched to the warehouse to handle the victims. EMS crews are diverted from the hospital and told to take the less serious victims to the warehouse. The HazMat team communicates with federal agencies and the CDC and they determine that the container was an improperly discarded cleaning agent. It is classified as an irritant, but is not deadly. Within hours people are treated and released from the hospitals and the warehouse and MMRS is deactivated.

Had the incident been larger and involved hundreds or thousands of victims, a larger or several receiving locations could have been established and additional supplies and personnel would have responded from several other US cities as needed.

The Metropolitan Medical Response System is made of a number of agencies and personnel from across the Valley to meet the overwhelming needs of the community during a disaster. Although the MMRS for the Las Vegas Valley is made up of many agencies, the grant to establish the MMRS was given to the City of Las Vegas. The city assigned Las Vegas Fire & Rescue to establish MMRS. Deputy Fire Chief Ken Riddle and Fire Training Officer Mike Myers are coordinators for MMRS for the fire department.

For more information about MMRS, check out their website at: [www.oep.dhhs.gov](http://www.oep.dhhs.gov) <<http://www.oep.dhhs.gov>> and [www.mmrs.hhs.gov](http://www.mmrs.hhs.gov) <<http://www.mmrs.hhs.gov>>.



# LETTERS TO THE CHIEF

August 17, 2001

To: Chief Rick Gracia & LVFR Staff

From: Chief Don Parker, Training Chief

Assistant Chief Kolar (County Training Chief) called me this morning to say what a great job Las Vegas Fire & Rescue crews did on the scene (4-Alarm blaze on August 16th.)

He stated that it is a great feeling that both the city and the county (fire departments) can work so well together when the rubber meets the road. He wanted to pass the word to everyone and say thanks.

August 17, 2001

To: David Washington, Fire Chief

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your department's assistance at our 4-alarm fire on August 16, 2001.

The Clark County Fire Department greatly appreciates the teamwork and support shown to us by the other valley entities. You can be proud of your firefighters and the tremendous job they did in assisting us at this most crucial time.

Once again, my deepest thanks. If we can be of service at any time, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely, Earl A. Greene, Fire Chief  
Clark County Fire Department

September 4, 2001

To: Tim Szymanski

I would like to thank Evert Wilson, of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue, for the excellent Fire Prevention presentation he conducted for Booz-Allen & Hamilton and other contractors on August 23, 2001.

Mr. Wilson's outstanding skill in presentation, coupled with his in-depth technical knowledge and intense motivation, resulted in the most effective and enjoyable safety meeting we have had in several years. His ability to hold the audience's attention while raising their level of concern for proper fire prevention considerations resulted in a total successful safety meeting.

Please convey our gratitude to Mr. Wilson for a job well done.

As a sidelight, we are all grateful to have access to Fire Protection Services of an ISO Class 1 Fire Department, one of a very few in the United States.

Sincerely, Richard L Toft, Project Manager  
Management & Technical Support Services

September 6, 2001

To: Chief David Washington

On July 27, 2001, the crews of T6 and R6 B Platoon responded to my home at 6409 Evergreen Avenue where I had been on the floor for approximately 17 hours with back spasms. Tony Rizzo and his crew: Nick Sandoval, Joseph Richard, John Bruner, John Harris; R6 Brett Strong, Xavier Flores; also, Brian Gray and Steve Wesley, are all to be commended for the very considerate and careful treatment they gave to me.

This was, by far, the best medical treatment that I have received at the hands of anyone in the medical profession, including the emergency room, the hospital stay, and subsequent physician's visits. These people are true professionals, and I thank God that someone still cares!

Congrats and thanks again to Station 6B crews!

Sandy Kirkwood, Fire Training Officer  
Las Vegas Fire & Rescue

September 14, 2001

Dear Editor:

For 50 years, fire fighters have been particular heroes of mine, both because of their tremendous fund-raising efforts for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and for the bravery they exhibit every time they're called upon.

We've all seen this remarkable courage and self-sacrifice in action this week in the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. MDA salutes the fire fighters, and law enforcement and other emergency personnel who've responded so heroically to this unspeakable tragedy—many at the cost of their own lives.

I urge all Americans to rally to the support of these lifesaving heroes during this time, in whatever way they see fit. One means would be to contribute to the New York Fire 9-11 Relief Fund, established by the International Association of Fire Fighters to provide financial assistance to families of fallen fire fighters and EMS personnel. Send donations to:

New York Firefighters 9-11 Disaster Relief Fund  
Attention: IAFF General Secretary-Treasurer  
1750 New York Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20006

Our emergency forces have given their all for us, time and again. Now it's time for us to provide them with help and hope.

On behalf of MDA, I extend deepest condolences to all those who've lost loved ones, and prayers for those who've suffered grievous injuries in the terrorist attacks.

God bless America as we join hands in strength and hope in these difficult days.

Sincerely, Jerry Lewis  
National Chairman MDA

September 18, 2001

To: Las Vegas Fire & Rescue  
From: Billie Bastian  
Subject: Re: 911 Day / Donations

I just want to thank you for providing this opportunity for me to contribute to something important in light of all the tragedy that occurred last week. My family and I have offered prayers and were just waiting for the right something to come along that is meaningful. Even though there have been so many choices, I feel the most satisfied knowing that the widows and children will receive a token of our love. Thanks.

September 24, 2001

Dear Chief Washington:

On September 22, 2001, Engine 3 and Rescue 3 responded to a motorcycle crash involving a middle-aged patient. The patient sustained multiple life threatening injuries. He arrived at the Trauma Center with outstanding prehospital care provided to him by your staff. Of particular note, we would like to commend the following paramedics: Jeremy Jacobs,

Continued on Page Ten

## Letters to the Chief

*Continued from Page Nine*

Ryan Wynn, Kirk Evans, Any Lewis, Andy Anderson, Thom Thomas, Steve Vermillion and the crew of Engine 3.

*We at the Trauma Center acknowledge the professionalism and clinical excellence provide by Las Vegas Fire & Rescue. We are proud to be partners in providing optimal care to the critically injured patients of our community.*

*On behalf of the staff of the Trauma Center at UMC, we would like to thank Las Vegas Fire & Rescue for a job well done.*

**Sincerely, John Fildes, M.D.**  
**Chief, Department of Trauma**

1 1 1

**October 16, 2001**

**Dear David:**

*I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the men and women of Las Vegas Fire & Rescue for their assistance at the Aero0Tech fire on October 15, 2001.*

*The Clark County Fire Department greatly appreciates the teamwork and support that you always show us. You can be proud of your firefighters and the tremendous job they did in assisting us at this most crucial time.*

*Once again, my deepest thanks. If we can be of service at any time, please do not hesitate to call.*

**Sincerely, Earl A Greene, Fire Chief**  
**Clark County Fire Department**

1 1 1

**October 24, 2001**

**Dear Ms. Ruiz:**

*On behalf of JumpStart ChildCare and myself, I would like to send a huge heartfelt "Thank You Very Much" to you for all your coordinating efforts. You have made the DayCare children incredibly happy and overwhelmed with excitement with your wonderful ensemble of fire prevention safety materials. Our ChildCare greatly appreciates and truly benefited from your genuine act of community service.*

*Once again, thank you for your generous and supportive efforts and please feel free to contact me, Ms. Toni, at (702) 648-9300 should you have any further inquiries.*

**Sincerely yours, Antoinette (Toni) Mims**  
**Executive Director, JumpStart, Inc.**

1 1 1

**September 21, 2001**

**Dear Firemen of Las Vegas:**

*I'm truly sorry for what happened September 11th. I hope this letter will make you feel better. I know a lot of firemen died in the disaster and I know you were all very close. In the Disney film Hercules, Zeus said to Hercules: "A true hero isn't measured by the size of his strength, but by the strength of his heart." I think that they (the firemen) did that.*

**Yours truly, Morgan E. Tribbitt, Las Vegas, NV**

1 1 1

**November 1, 2002**

**Dear Dave:**

*I read with great interest that the Las Vegas Fire Department as recently honored by Firehouse Magazine with the Firehouse Magazine 2000 Heroism and Community Service Award I and was delighted to see that*

## LVFR Staff Meet Neighbors at Open House Events

Beginning with Saturday, October 13, Las Vegas Fire & Rescue staff flung open their doors to the community and invited residents to visit their stations at three *Open House* events. The first Open House took place at Station #3, at Bonanza and Washington Avenues. Firefighters were on hand to talk with the visitors and display station equipment. The Fire Safety House (*a mobile classroom that simulates a fire*) was on the scene and Southern Nevada Inoculation Coalition (SNIC) were present to provide flu and pneumonia vaccinations at a nominal charge to senior citizens 65 years or older. Information was also available on personal disaster preparedness and on various aspects of fire prevention.

Station #8 (at Bonanza and Mojave) held an Open House on Saturday, October 20. In addition to duplicating the format used at Station #3's Open House, firefighters provided three "live fire" demonstrations at Station #8.

LVFR held the last Open House, on Saturday, December 1, at their newest station, Station #41, located in the northwest part of the city. Station #41 opened in December of 2000, and at the request of many people who live in the Centennial Hills area of the city, the station was opened to the public so that they could see the new station and meet the personnel who protect them.

In addition to fire units being on display and tours of the fire station, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police also had units on display. Mercy Air medical helicopter and Valley Hospital's Flight for Life helicopter landed and were on display during the event. These two units are used in the northwest part of the city for medical transport for the more critical calls.

Since opening in December 2000, the crews at Fire Station #41 have saved countless dollars in damage from fire destruction in one of the fastest growing areas of the valley. The station has cut response times in that part of the city dramatically and residents feel much safer knowing that help is just a phone call away.

*you have been publicly recognized for your accomplishment.*

*As outstanding citizens and dedicated public servants, you are an inspiration to the rest of our community. Southern Nevada's unique way of life and unparalleled success are enhanced by your presence.*

*It gives me great pleasure when I have the opportunity to brag about our community and the wonderful people who live here. Thank you for making Southern Nevada a fine place to live and to call home.*

**Sincerely, Shelly Berkley, Member of Congress**



With  
unbounded  
thanks to  
our public  
servants:



**There are men and women everywhere;  
They serve us every way!  
They take their lives in danger,  
To save us everyday!  
They are, our public servants,  
We thank you very much,  
They never think a moment,  
Of the danger they are in.  
They give their life for you and me;  
They truly are, our friends.  
They're our police and fire fighters;  
Our EMS as well, they give so much  
To all of us,  
They work hard every day!  
We could not live without you;  
We thank you and we pray;  
That God will keep you safe;  
Out of harm's way!  
To wake up with your families;  
To see another day!  
We honor you and praise you;  
In cities and in towns,  
From New York where you died;  
To save so many lives!  
All across our Nation;  
In tribute and in praise!  
We thank you for your service;  
We honor you today!  
For all the brave ones fallen;  
That died and went away;  
You will always be remembered.  
And honored every day!  
We thank you for your service;  
We honor you today!**

*by Diane Huggins, Langeloth PA*

# More Gratitude and Appreciation

**December 7, 2001**

**TO: LAS VEGAS FIRE & RESCUE**

**Brother and Sister firefighters,**

*I would like to thank all of the members of our nation's fire departments who have supported*



*us during this very difficult period in FDNY history. My name is FF Michael Ripoll and I am assigned to HazMat 1. Along with Squad 288, our firehouse lost 19 members of the 343 firefighters lost on 9/11. All of the support you have shown our department has been*

*greatly appreciated. We will never forget what our nations brother and sister firefighters have done for us.*

*Thank You and Stay Safe,*

**FF MICHAEL RIPOLL**

**FDNY HAZMAT 1**

1 1 1

**September 21, 2001**

***This isn't enough to repay you,  
but it's a start —  
Thank you.***

*I have always been grateful to all of you who risk your lives to save us. I hope that if anything positive came of the recent tragedy, it is that you get thanked a little more often by regular people who you serve every day. I am a master's student in psychology at UNLV. Thank you all for all you do.*

**SINCERELY,**

**LESLIE SNYDER, LAS VEGAS**

1 1 1



***Congratulations TO FIRE TRAINING OFFICER MIKE MYERS ON BEING NOMINATED FOR THE MARCH OF DIMES "NURSE CHOICE" AWARD, WHICH WAS PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MARCH OF DIMES "NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS" AT TEXAS STATION ON NOVEMBER 2ND.***

## Be Prepared...

*Continued from Page Two*

would meet, how to stay in contact and other details.

8. **Another important point** is to take safety committee meetings and drills at your place of work seriously. Fire drills, evacuation drills, bomb threat procedures and other training should all be taken seriously, as a disaster can occur anytime, anywhere.

***For more information about disaster preparedness contact the Las Vegas Fire & Rescue Emergency Public Information Officer Tim Szymanski at 229-5911.***

## Construction Update

*Continued from Page Two*

age. Exterior design is intended to blend with the existing station. In 2000, a similar rescue bay was added at Station #42.

The plans for Fire Station #43, #44, and #45, and Stations #2, #7 and #9 are complete. They include improvements and the suggestions offered by our personnel for better facilities. One notable item is the diesel exhaust system included in all apparatus bays, as well as in retrofit of the existing bays. This 48,502 square feet of new fire facilities. All the above projects are estimated to be under construction in 2002!

### ***Newsletter Credits***

#### ***Editorial Staff***

Maureen Pezzullo • Tim Szymanski

#### ***Production/Layout***

Graphic Services Division

#### ***Photographs***

Tim Szymanski • Louis Baker

#### ***Contributing Reporters***

Louis Baker • Rick Diebold • Sandy Kirkwood  
Mike Myers • Tim Szymanski • Maureen Pezzullo

